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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
7 December 1971

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

India-Pakistan Situation Report
(As of 1600 EST)

Political

1. President Yahya Khan is moving ahead with his timetable for the establishment of a civilian coalition government. Today Islamabad announced that Nurul Amin--an East Pakistani friendly to the Yahya government and the leader of the recently formed multi-party United Coalition Party--will be prime minister. Leftist politician Z. A. Bhutto has been tapped to be deputy prime minister and foreign minister. Yahya has been negotiating with Amin and Bhutto for several weeks and their selection had been anticipated. The full cabinet is yet to be announced. Bhutto's first assignment will be at the UN, where he will head the Pakistani delegation. He is scheduled to depart Islamabad for New York either today or tomorrow.

2. Officials of the Bangla Desh mission in Calcutta announced today that Dacca will become the permanent capital of Bangla Desh. Previously, Jessoror had been envisioned as the new Bengali capital.

Communist China

3. Peking has denounced India's recognition of the People's Republic of Bangla Desh as evidence of an expansionist policy which seeks to annex East Pakistan. Citing Indian and Western sources, an NCNA article published on 6 December charged that

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Bangla Desh was "entirely the creation of India," and that India had been scheming since the start of the troubles in East Pakistan to push this policy. The article buttressed China's criticism of Moscow's actions in the Indo-Pakistani crisis by alleging that the USSR encouraged the Indians to create Bangla Desh by invading Pakistan.

4. Peking's heightened criticism of New Delhi undoubtedly will set back the rapprochement toward which both countries had been slowly moving and will limit China's room to maneuver with an independent Bangla Desh.

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Soviet Behavior

6. Soviet party leader Brezhnev today reiterated the warning, first issued in a TASS statement on 5 December, against outside parties intervening in the crisis on the subcontinent. In a speech before the Polish party congress, Brezhnev said that the USSR hoped for a political solution that would take into account the legitimate rights of the peoples of the area (i.e., those in East Pakistan), "without any interference by external forces" (China, China and the US).

7. Soviet media have for the first time begun referring to Bangla Desh as the "national liberation movement of East Pakistan," but there has been no authoritative Soviet comment on India's decision to recognize the "government" of Bangla Desh. The Soviets will be under pressure from India to follow suit, but there are a number of factors, nonetheless, that militate against early Soviet recognition. The Soviets realize that if they recognize Bangla Desh, Islamabad would almost certainly break relations with Moscow. Moscow would prefer to retain a presence in West Pakistan as long as circumstances allow. Moreover, the

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Soviets have in the past been reluctant to recognize governments that were not securely established or that have not been recognized by a significant number of other countries. In any event, a Soviet decision on this issue will probably have to await the return of party leader Brezhnev, who is not due back in Moscow until the end of the week. At a press conference this afternoon shortly before leaving Norway, Premier Kosygin said as much when he declared that his government had not yet had time to discuss the matter.

Other International Developments

8. Yesterday Ceylon's Prime Minister Bandaranaike reportedly directed the Ministry of Defense and External Affairs to hold preliminary discussions and make initial preparations for a possible UN-sponsored "Asian conference" to be held in Colombo. She is responding to a proposal recently made at the UN for a conference of concerned Asian nations. Mrs. Bandaranaike is anxious to be in the international limelight and would be enthusiastic about playing host to such a conclave.

9. Indonesia reportedly has offered its good offices to achieve a settlement of the conflict. Both Ceylon and Indonesia have attempted to retain neutral postures since the conflict erupted.

10. The Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan is the second country to recognize Bangla Desh. The move comes as no surprise because India controls Bhutan's foreign policy.

11. Belgium reportedly has suspended arms shipments to India and Pakistan. Brussels' announcement of the cancellation of all pending license applications is expected today.

12. Now Delhi has released a list of items it considers contraband. Details on blockade and contraband procedures are still lacking. Meanwhile, the US merchant ship "Expeditor," which had been detained in Madras by the Indian Navy on suspicion

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it was transporting military supplies for the Pakistani Army, sailed today for Burma. The captain reportedly gave written assurances to New Delhi that the ship carried no military goods intended for Pakistani units.

13. The UN General Assembly began debate today on a possible cease-fire appeal or other steps to end the hostilities. Assembly President Adam Malik of Indonesia imposed a 10-minute limit on speeches except those of India and Pakistan. Somalia has asked the UN General Assembly to adopt a resolution calling for both a cease-fire and withdrawal of troops. There is no word yet as to when the Assembly will vote on this proposal; we continue to believe that there is a clear majority for such wording. The issue will probably be viewed as an Important Question under Article 18 of the UN Charter, thereby requiring two-thirds support for adoption. Even that margin is probably attainable. However, there may also be substantial backing for amendments the US does not favor. The Soviets and the Indians almost certainly will seek language calling for a settlement favoring the majority in East Pakistan.

Military Situation in the East

14. While Indian Army Chief of Staff General Manekshaw appealed to the Pakistani forces in East Pakistan to "lay down your arms before it is too late," the Indians were claiming to have smashed Pakistani defenses west of Jessore. According to the latest press reports, the troops are now attempting to clear the Pakistanis from the town. In addition, the Indian Army reportedly has pushed as far as Jhenida. This drive could eventually cut off the southwestern corner of East Pakistan from land communications with the rest of the province.

15. Further north, the Indians claim control of large towns in the northwestern corner of the province, but none of the large towns has fallen. In the eastern sectors, the Indians claim to have

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taken Sylhet and to be advancing on Jamalpur. No further Indian advances have been reported near Comilla, although the Indians claim the town is surrounded.

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17. One of the most sustained air raids since fighting began took place at Dacca today. Indian planes repeatedly attacked Tejgaon Airport and the Kurmitola cantonment. Except for tactical mistakes, however, the Indian Air Force apparently has been avoiding civilian areas near Dacca.

18. A spokesman for the Canadian Government has denied that a Canadian C-130 was attacked this morning on its way to Dacca to evacuate personnel under UN auspices. Apparently the pilot flew over an Indian aircraft carrier that was under attack and assumed that some of the anti-aircraft bursts were directed at him. The UN will try to evacuate the people tomorrow. If a plane takes off, American personnel will probably use as many spaces on the UN/Canadian flight as available.

19. UN Assistant Secretary General Henry has asked Secretary General Thant to convene the Security Council immediately to consider the

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continuing problem of evacuating foreigners from Dacca. Henry hopes the Council will either call for a short cease-fire for evacuation purposes or establish neutral zones in Dacca in which foreigners could be sheltered under Red Cross auspices. He doubts that the Dacca airport runways can be made serviceable for evacuation by plane but believes helicopters operating off carriers can be utilized. At this hour there is no indication that Thant will convoke the Council.

Situation in the West

20. The Pakistan Army is making some progress in the west and Indian officials are expressing some concern. The Pakistanis have strengthened their offensive in the Chamb area of Kashmir, and an Indian spokesman claims the enemy has thrown two infantry divisions and three armored regiments into the battle. The Indians admit losing Chamb, but claim to have destroyed 138 tanks in battles along the western front. The Pakistani drive on Chamb probably has the ultimate objective of cutting the main road network north of Jammu. The other Pakistani drive into Kashmir has yet to take Punch.

21. In the Punjab area, the Indians have launched some counterattacks to blunt the Pakistani thrusts, and both sides are taking increasing casualties.

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12. Both sides continue to make air strikes on the western front and neither has yet achieved clear superiority.

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INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUPPLEMENT

To

India-Pakistan Situation Report
(As of 1600 EST)

China's Military Options and Capabilities
Against India's Border Areas

Summary

A review of all the available evidence indicates that China is not militarily prepared for major and sustained involvement in the war between India and Pakistan. Peking's military posture along the Himalayas is not known in all its details, but it is clear that involvement on the scale of the 1962 invasion of India is probably beyond China's present capabilities. China does retain the option of a smaller scale effort, ranging from overt troop movements and publicized preparations to aggressive patrolling and harassment of Indian border outposts or a limited diversionary attack. At present, however, Peking appears to be keeping its head down.

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Chinese Forces on the Border

China has about 86,000 ground forces troops assigned to areas along India's northern borders, 76,000 in the Tibet Military District of the Cheng-tu Military Region and 10,000 in the Ali Subdistrict of the Sinkiang Military Region. About 60,000 are assigned to combat units (50,000

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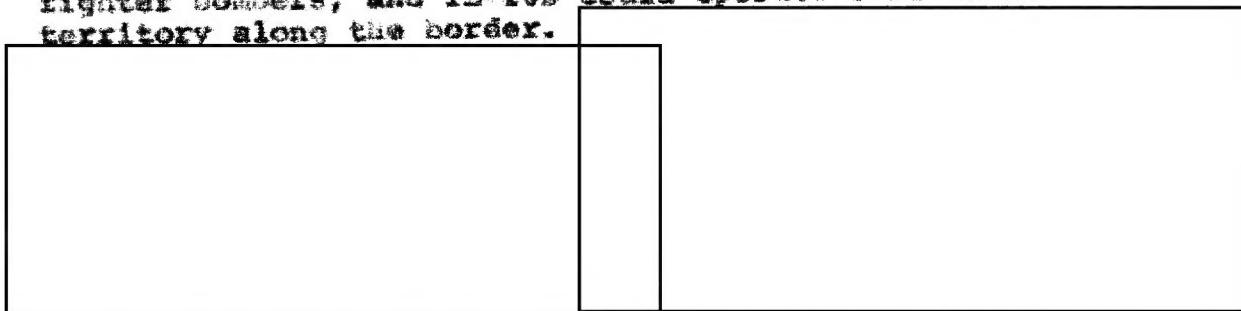
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near the border) and the rest are support personnel. Not all the assigned troops are present for duty, however, with many detached for civilian activities, propaganda work, on leave, or otherwise out of the area.

There are no Chinese air force combat units in Tibet, and the Chinese have made no apparent effort to build up an air capability in the border area. China has four airfields in western China from which fighters, fighter bombers, and IL-28s could operate over Indian territory along the border.

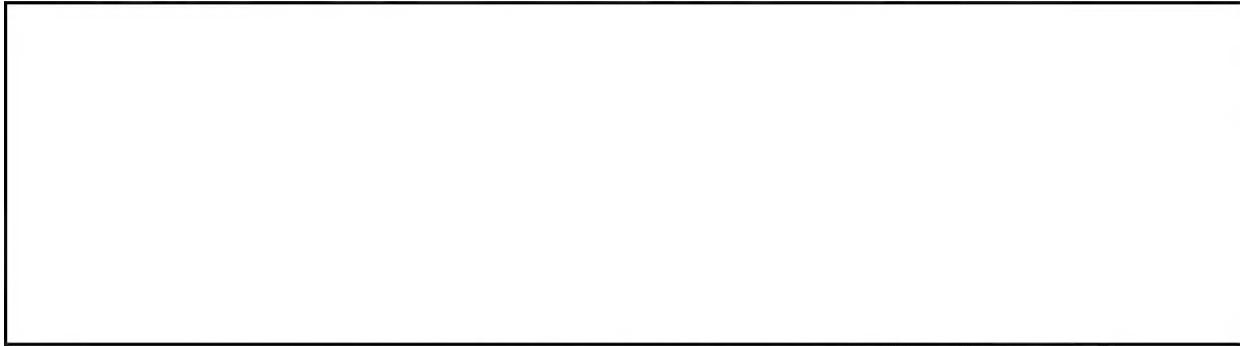
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Chinese YU-16 jet medium bombers, of which there are over 30 in operational units, could penetrate well into India from these four fields and from a few more distant fields. They would have to do so without fighter escort.

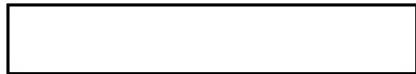
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The difficult terrain in Tibet and the long and arduous supply routes are and will remain a major factor in any Chinese military options in the Indian border regions. Tibet is supplied by truck over three rugged mountain roads which stretch 1,200-1,400 miles from the nearest railheads. Mechanical maintenance of trucks has been poor, and apparently only a fraction of the trucks assigned to Tibet are in top operating condition. ~~Road maintenance is also a problem, with snow, landslides, and frequent floods often closing major portions of the routes.~~ S-2

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condition. Road maintenance is also a problem, with snow, landslides, and flash floods often closing major portions of the routes.



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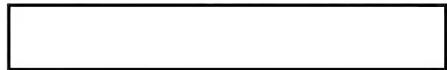
Current logistic forces in the region probably would be unable to supply the troops in Tibet under conditions of sustained moderate or heavy levels of combat. Such levels of fighting would require a four-to-six-fold increase over the volume of supplies consumed by combat units in peacetime. Although the Chinese might initially engage in moderate or heavy fighting, their combat efforts would depend on resupply from other areas as soon as military stores in regional depots were exhausted. From what is known about the state of Chinese war reserves in the region, POL and ammunition appear to be in least adequate supply. Furthermore, with the end of autumn season, which is best suited for military operations in the Himalayan region, unfavorable weather conditions will impede and sometimes stop the flow of troops and materiel to the region.

By diverting large numbers of trucks and maintenance forces from other parts of the country, Peking could with difficulty establish a capability to support a moderate level of sustained combat along the Tibetan borders. This would take at least two or three months to achieve and would be costly in economic terms, however. (During the past 16 months, the Chinese have been steadily increasing the number of vehicles and motor units serving Tibet,



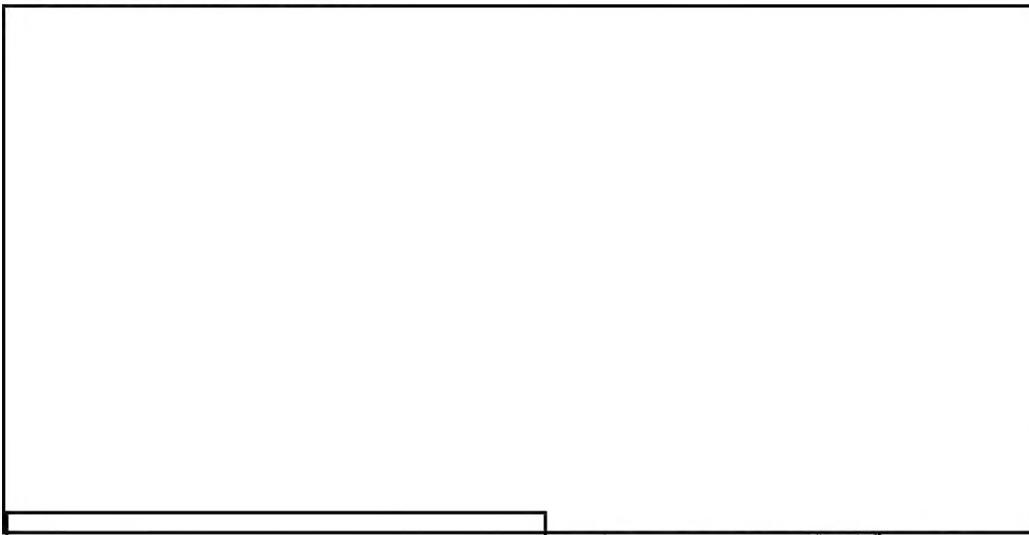
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but these efforts appear aimed at solving present difficulties rather than providing for an improved combat capability.)

China's Options



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Prior to the 1962 war, China carefully stockpiled materiel for months in advance and built up a force estimated at about 110,000 men. Even if such preparations were now under way, they would be far from fruition. Across the border, India is better trained, equipped, and deployed than in 1962 even though some units have been reoriented against East Pakistan.

Short of major involvement, however, the Chinese are capable of causing the Indians considerable trouble in the area. India still suffers traumatic effects from the humiliation of 1962,

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Chinese sabre rattling and minor clashes at widely scattered points along the border area could make India uneasy about diverting forces away from the Chinese border and could thereby tie down considerable Indian strength.

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Because India has very little capability to send large forces over the Himalayan passes into Chinese territory and because India is now at war with Pakistan, Chinese harassing action along the border would carry little risk of unwanted escalation into prolonged, major fighting.

Therefore, on the basis of present military capability, China cannot now launch a sustained major attack down the Himalayas into the Indian plains. China could, at little military risk, support a series of harassing attacks and probes in the high mountain area in order to keep large numbers of Indian troops tied down should Peking decide to do so.



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